

As a "blue ribbon school," Our Lady of the Hamptons is a model for the entire Nation. While violence wrecks classrooms in other parts of the country and drugs infest school yards in both cities and suburbs, Our Lady of the Hamptons is a beacon of responsibility and success that shines as an example for students and teachers everywhere.

What makes Our Lady of the Hamptons so unique, I believe, is its conviction that education is more than a matter of books and tests or homework and quizzes. Education at Our Lady of the Hamptons is ultimately about character. It's about morals and values. It is about learning the difference between right and wrong.

At Our Lady of the Hamptons, success is not necessarily defined as a straight A-plus average. Rather, success is a combination of academic excellence and responsible leadership.

These students chosen for membership in the National Junior Honor Society are certainly very intelligent, but more importantly, they are also role models for their peers. They are examples of decent and generous young adults.

They have helped with lunch duty and they have organized food drives. They have made AIDS quilts to show their compassion for their brothers and sisters who are suffering, and they have distributed milk to their classmates during lunchtime. They have collected clothes and toys to send to their adopted classmates in Ecuador and they have helped their teachers on countless occasions just by their very example of good conduct.

Through all of these acts of generosity both big and small, these exceptional students have proven that true leadership is about service. I was once told that the strongest people are those who share their strength with others. If that really is the case, and I do believe it is, these are some of the strongest people on the planet.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the entire House of Representatives joins me in expressing well-deserved congratulations to these terrific students as well as their families, their teachers, and everybody else who makes up the wonderful community at Our Lady of the Hamptons. On behalf of all of our neighbors throughout eastern Long Island, I am truly proud to represent them in Congress.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HMONG VETERANS NATURALIZATION ACT

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 7, 1995

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Hmong Veterans Naturalization Act which would ease naturalization requirements for the Hmong, of Laos, who fought alongside the United States Armed Forces during the Vietnam war. On April 2, I had the privilege to participate in an event held to honor those Lao-Hmong veterans who fought on the side of the United States in the Vietnam war at great sacrifice to themselves, their families, and their entire community. Hmong of all ages fought and died alongside United States soldiers and as a result of the brave position they took and their loyalty to the United States the Hmong, tragically, lost their homeland. The Hmong people have endured these sacrifices

and losses. They have worked hard to ensure that their culture endured.

Many who survived the conflict were welcomed to the United States and today should be honored for the contributions they are making to our communities in my district in Minnesota and to our Nation. Their success in rebuilding their families and communities in the United States stands as a tribute to them but their cause would be greatly helped by passage of the legislation I am introducing today, the Hmong Veterans Naturalization Act.

Although it was not apparent then, their actions had a major impact on achieving today's global order and the positive changes of the past decade. This time was difficult and extreme sacrifices were made by those engaged in the jungles and the highlands whether in uniform or in peasant clothing and for those whose homeland was the battlefield.

The Lao-Hmong veterans deserve this recognition and consideration. The Vietnam conflict is a page in history for some and forgotten or even unknown by our youth, but surely it is an event burned deeply and vividly into the minds of the Lao-Hmong veterans and their families who shoulder the duty. Between 10,000 and 20,000 Hmong were killed in combat and over 100,000 had to flee to refugee camps to survive. While it is clear that the Hmong served bravely and sacrificed dearly in the Vietnam war, many of those who did survive and made it to the United States, are separated from other family members and are having a difficult time adjusting to life here. Fortunately there is something we can do to speed up the process of family reunification and ease the adjustment of Hmong into United States society, at no cost to the Federal Government.

My legislation makes the attainment of citizenship easier for those who served in the Special Guerrilla Units by waiving the English language test and period in residence requirement. The greatest obstacle for the Hmong in becoming a citizen is passing the English test. Written characters for Hmong have only been introduced recently, and whatever chances most Hmong who served may have had to learn a written language were disrupted by the war.

This bill would also waive the residency requirement for those who served in order to speed up the process of family reunification. Current law permits aliens or noncitizen nationals who served honorably during World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict, and the Vietnam war to be naturalized regardless of age, period of residence or physical presence in the United States. There is a well-established precedent of modifying naturalization requirement for military service, recently reaffirmed by passage of legislation granting citizenship to those who served in the Filipino Scouts during World War II.

The Hmong stood by the United States at a crucial time and that service deserves recognition and today we should stand with the Lao-Hmong in their struggle to become citizens and to live a good life in our Nation.

THE INTRODUCTION OF REVENUE BOND AUTHORITY BILL

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 7, 1995

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that presents a unique and extraordinary economic opportunity for the District of Columbia. This bill offers this unprecedented opportunity through revenue bonding authority, including the authority to build a new convention center, as well as a new sports arena downtown. These are not only remarkable projects. In light of the District's need for revenue in the midst of a severe economic crisis, these projects are remarkably timed. These two buildings hold virtually the only promise for indispensable economic development for a city that otherwise faces an unprecedented and painful fiscal crisis. The bonding authority authorized in this bill will mark a critical step toward the revival of the economy of the District.

Today, the Washington Convention Center operates at a 90-percent occupancy range. In this year alone, the District will lose over \$80 million in economic impact because of the loss of shows that are too large for the present center. However, the new convention center will be three times the size of the current center. That translates into over \$2.8 billion in direct convention revenue for the District between 1998 and 2003. On the other hand, without the new center, the District will lose \$968 million in direct convention revenue by the year 2002.

A new sports arena also could not come at a better time for the District. Moving the arena from the Maryland suburbs to downtown Washington will result in more than \$100 million in net new spending in the District annually from people buying tickets and purchases from concessions at events, as well as patronizing restaurants in the area. The arena also will create a minimum of 540 full-time equivalent jobs in the city.

It is important to note that these projects are not pipe dreams that may or may not come true. The District's Hotel Association has agreed to an increase in the hotel tax to back the convention center bonds and the owner of the two sports franchises has agreed to pay the cost of building the arena. The only thing that stands in the way of making these a reality is congressional approval of revenue bonding authority for the District.

I strongly urge support for this legislation. It will help give the District of Columbia the tools to become again the master of its own economic destiny.

SILVER JUBILEE OF PORICY PARK

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 7, 1995

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, April 22, Poricy Park in Middletown, NJ, will celebrate its Silver Jubilee. It is a great honor for me to pay tribute to this wonderful resource for the people of Middletown and the surrounding communities of Monmouth County. Owned by Middletown Township, Poricy